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IOWA DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND ARCHIVES


THE
ANNALS OF IOWA *N*

AN HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

THIRD SERIES

VOL. XXIII, No. 4

APRIL, 1942

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PUBLISHED BY THE
IOWA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
AND ARCHIVES
DES MOINES, IOWA

IOWA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND ARCHIVES

Established as a department of the State of Iowa in 1892, and administered by a Board of Trustees composed of the Governor of the State, the Chief Justice of the Iowa State Supreme Court, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the department consists of the following divisions:

- THE ANNALS OF IOWA, an Historical Quarterly
- The Historical and Genealogical Library
- The Manuscript Collections of letters and correspondence of prominent figures and movements relating to Iowa
- The Museum Division: Indian, geology, pioneer life, transportation, and natural history collections and exhibits
- The Newspaper Division
- The Portrait Gallery of historical figures
- The Public Archives of the State of Iowa

THE ANNALS OF IOWA

In the interest of preserving Iowa history, the Iowa State Department of History and Archives, as an official and permanent department of the state, solicits the presentation to its Manuscript Collection of letters, diaries, family histories, and general manuscripts about Iowans and the area of which the state is a geographical part. The department welcomes for publication in its ANNALS OF IOWA, the reminiscences, the writings, observations and studies of those familiar with important and significant events and movements in the state's history.

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THE ANNALS OF IOWA

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Vol. XXIII

THIRD SERIES

No. 4

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THE IOWA HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT

BY ORA WILLIAMS

The Iowa Historical Department commenced as a hobby. That is the way of a good many beginnings. A bright young printer got the idea as he was sweeping out the office of a country newspaper. The young man rescued from the waste basket the wrapper of a package thrown there by his employer who had also been his schoolmate at an academy. The employer asked why, and the boy said he was interested in the signature by which the package had been franked. It was the signature of a then famous United States Senator who had placed his name there in lieu of a postage stamp. A newspaper office is a good place for starting a hobby of this kind, and the collection grew. It interested the boss and the apprentice. Its immense possibilities soon became evident and the hobby took definite shape.

The young man who leaned on a broom as he rescued a signature from the waste basket was Charles Aldrich.

The signature thus first noticed was that of Thomas H. Benton of Missouri, the "Old Bullion" of other days, and in due time Charles Aldrich secured a copy of Benton's book, *Thirty Years' View*, pasted the signature therein, and loaned the book into oblivion. But the hobby was a spirited horse and Mr. Aldrich rode it well and to a final goal not often attained.

The Iowa Department of History and Archives, long and familiarly known to all as the "Iowa Historical Department," is this year celebrating its semicentennial as an organized department of the state. The chief value of this review of its history is that planning for the next fifty years may be better. The Department did not spring forth in full strength as if by some magic touch. Before the official date of the beginning a great deal had been done. It is what was in the minds of a large number of those who had engaged in

making history or in keeping the record, chief among whom was Charles Aldrich. They formed a pattern that has been closely followed.

It was in Warren, Pennsylvania, that Aldrich picked up his first autograph. The editor who was willing had been a schoolmate in an academy at Jamestown, N. Y. He soon found himself shifting about, after the manner of craftsmen of his time, editing newspapers, getting married and looking with longing eyes to the then far west. Mr. Aldrich tried out his editorial capacity at Olean, N.Y., and elsewhere, and the test was satisfactory. The hobby was nine years old when Aldrich and wife, in 1857, started for the land beyond the big river, without social security number or any guaranty beyond that of willing hands and honest purposes.

Charles Aldrich found himself among kindred spirits in this newly formed frontier society. The men and women were of a type common to the pioneering movement. They had all the varied talents and characteristics essential for the making of a state. It was exceedingly fortunate that Mr. Aldrich, when he edged his way to the very rim of the frontier with a printing press and a valuable hobby, brought with him a wife who was a true helpmate. Together they entered into all the activities of the ambitious folks of Webster City, the newly established county seat of Hamilton County, and in the *Hamilton Freeman* they made record of the progress of a typical Iowa community.

The editorial sanctum of that time was a center of political and cultural activity. The editor not only tried to print the news but he had a hand in moulding public opinion. The era was rich in political currents. In the region from whence Aldrich came the Free Soil movement was rising to its high duty, and in Iowa Mr. Aldrich found the first state admitted into the Union with its soil dedicated to human freedom. The time of compromises was drawing to an end.

Mr. Aldrich became and long continued a newspaper editor of much influence, and as such and as a legislator he came to know Iowa history and Iowa men in a way most useful to the state.

The zeal with which the making of a historical collection had been started in 1848 in a small town hemmed in by mountains found greater freedom on the prairies of Iowa. There was much letter writing and many little journeys to the haunts of the great both in the United States and across the ocean. The rare genius that comes with persistence and singleness of purpose yielded rich returns that will be appreciated by many generations of Iowans.

When the building of the state capitol was nearly finished and the commission was buying the furniture, in the early 1880's, Mr. Aldrich instigated the making of two autograph cases sufficient to hold a large part of his collection that had grown steadily through thirty years. They were located in an out-of-the-way place on the basement floor of the capitol but by the time the building itself was formally dedicated Mr. Aldrich had made his nook popular.

These collection cases form the corner stone of the Historical Department. They stand today at the entrance to the main office and have back of them a dozen others filled with material the value of which is beyond estimation. One of these original cases bears a plate on which is inscribed:

The Aldrich Collection. Presented to the State of Iowa by Charles Aldrich and Matilda Williams Aldrich, of Webster City, Hamilton county, June 10, 1884.

The idea of a state historical department was in the mind of Mr. Aldrich long before this, but it was too soon to have it become a reality. The first case contains properly the writings and portraits of the presidents of the United States. But the nineteenth century was notable for its great men and great women and these and the notable personages of Iowa fill the cases.

The craftsmen were still at work on the state capitol when the two cases were set up and Mr. Aldrich borrowed a chair and a desk. He asked and received no compensation for his first work. It was a labor of love for him and his wife. But he knew public men, from having been

a clerk of the House of Representatives several terms and a member of the legislature from Hamilton County, and the wide acquaintance thus made and his high standing as a newspaper editor with convictions, opened the way for realizing his dreams. He had learned that a man with a vision, even though only the editor of a weekly newspaper, had the power to move mountains by sticking to the job, for indeed it was like moving a mountain to get his dream embodied in a statute, and his autograph collection established as he had wished.

Funds were grudgingly contributed by a legislature to add two more autograph cases and to pay postage as the founder searched for more material that should be reclaimed from waste baskets and musty attics. The job was becoming too big for the founder. The history makers and the history recorders the legislators and the editors, were becoming deeply interested. The next step was to hold a reunion of surviving members of the legislators of the territory and state and others who had held high office. A call was signed by a number of well known men. The response was good and the first reunion opened on February 24, 1886. There were nearly a hundred persons present. The state was forty years old but the pioneering days were fresh to the memory of many. The state capitol was almost completed and only a few of the departments were in the old temporary capitol.

It was a notable convention, a meeting of prominent and forceful men. There were several who had been members of the territorial legislatures and one who was conspicuous in the very first one held. A majority of the men had been prominent in the public service or in private life through many years. Here was a man who was builder of the capitol, another who helped organize the state, editors who had participated in the struggles of early statehood, judges, educators and preachers and city and railroad builders. The reunion included sessions in the two halls of the General Assembly and many fine speeches were made. By resolution the officers elected were asked to call another meeting to be held four years later, which was done.

This first reunion came to an abrupt end in an unhappy climax that forcibly pressed upon the attention of everyone the frailty of human life and the imperative need for securing of the pioneer lawmakers a record of their own notable contribution to history. The joint meeting with members of the House of Representatives was about concluded when Judge James L. Mitchell arose to speak. He had been a member of the Ninth General Assembly and later had gone to Nebraska after a brilliant career as a soldier of the Union army. Judge Mitchell was making the final response to greetings and had just said:

"I revere the men and the labors of the Ninth General Assembly and I must ever love the patriotism and heroic devotion of the Iowa soldiers."

His voice then fell to a whisper, and, as he remarked that he had already spoken too long, he fell to the floor of the House and never spoke again.

The present writer has a vivid recollection of the consternation of the tragic incident; and later had the pleasure of assisting Mr. Aldrich in preparing for publication the report of the reunion.

This tragic episode served to focus attention in all parts of the state upon the meeting of those pioneer public servants, and to remind one and all of the great services they had rendered, of which too little was fully known.

The years that followed were fruitful in arousing much public favor for the work being done. The elder statesmen were thoroughly committed to the support of what seemed to be in the mind of Mr. Aldrich, but which had not as yet been formed into a plan. Great interest was shown by the newspaper editors, partly because of their affection for a fellow editor with a vision, but more so because his work was right in line with their daily task of recording history as it was being made. The autograph collection already made was the source of material for a number of interesting newspaper and magazine articles and had attracted attention in other states.

The second reunion resulted in the formation of the Pioneer Lawmakers Association, which has been continued

to the present time. This reunion met in February, 1890, when the Twenty-Third General Assembly was in session. The attendance was large and the personnel was of the same distinguished character as that which had been seen at the first reunion. At the outset the following resolution was offered and passed unanimously:

Whereas, by reason of long neglect and indifference on the part of our former authorities and our citizens, many valuable records, pamphlets and other documents have either been destroyed, lost or gathered into public libraries abroad, therefore be it

Resolved, that it is the sense of the Pioneer Lawmakers of Iowa in session that the General Assembly be earnestly invited and urged to take immediate steps to collect and preserve all documents written or printed pertaining to the history of the Territory and State of Iowa.

There was the usual courtesy session with the two houses of the General Assembly and a number of able speeches recalling the legislative work of past years. Mr. Aldrich, who in the meantime had moved into the state library with his autograph cases, invited those attending the reunion to visit the same and look over the collection. Afterwards the following indorsement was adopted:

Resolved, that as the early history of every state is a matter of great importance, and the historical collection in the state library, known as the "Aldrich collection," is now and in coming years will be of great value, and the time and labor necessary to be spent in attending to the same, are more than any private citizen can afford to give without a compensation, therefore we respectfully ask the General Assembly to make sufficient appropriation therefor.

The legislature did take notice of this modest request and provided funds to buy more cases and to give Mr. Aldrich a very modest wage to be superintendent of the same for two years.

Governor Larrabee in his message to the General Assembly in 1888 had indorsed the work being done, and Governor Boies two years later did the same. When the third reunion was held in February, 1892, a bill had already

been introduced by Senator Charles H. Gatch of Polk County, and this was indorsed by the association, which further added,

Especially do we approve of the main feature of the bill, which is to appoint a curator of historical collections, who shall, in the language of the bill, proceed to collect and arrange books, maps, charts, public documents, manuscripts and other papers and materials illustrative of the history of Iowa in particular and of the west generally.

With this backing the bill quickly passed the Senate unanimously and the House with very little opposition, and it was approved by the Governor on April 8, 1892. Thus was the Department made a part of the work of the state itself.

The bill authorized that three rooms in the basement of the state house be set apart for this new Department and that for two years there should be an appropriation for each year of \$7,500, and thereafter \$6,000 annually for support and to pay the cost of additions and upkeep.

Charles Aldrich was appointed curator by the board of trustees for the state library and was given a salary of \$1,200 a year. He named B. F. Gue, former lieutenant governor, as his assistant, and they went to work the first of July following.

The new department of the state grew with amazing rapidity. More cases were bought and filled. Newspaper files were accumulated rapidly. The collection of oil paintings of prominent men got under way. A library was organized. Valuable gifts had been made to the Department. But for lack of room the state was continually losing valuable material. The need of a hall for a natural history and science museum for the state at the state capital had become apparent.

Curator Aldrich stated in his first formal report to the General Assembly that the construction of a memorial hall or historical building "would seem to be a great public necessity." Iowa was entitled to have and maintain a state historical museum, and it should be kept growing, for as

he said, "a finished museum is a dead museum." And he added:

There is apparently no end to the amount of materials which may be readily obtained for this purpose. The great need is a place in which they can be safely kept and conveniently exhibited.

The appeal fell upon deaf legislative ears, but the editors and public men had heard, and they kept up agitation.

One of the first things done under direction of the trustees for the Department was to resume publication of *The Annals of Iowa*, a quarterly journal of historical information. This was commenced in 1893 after several years of abandonment. It was the plan of the curator and trustees to have the state publish an organ for dissemination of historical information with sufficient state support to keep it free from any commercialism or bias.

The difficulties in the way of securing a state historical building were great. There was no place for it on the state house grounds. The only other land owned by the state was not well located. The legislators were quick to respond to askings for institutions anywhere in the state except at the seat of government. The up-state prejudice against anything that might even incidentally be of benefit to the capital city of the state was strong. Mr. Aldrich, who had been a legislator, well understood the seriousness of this handicap to his plans.

To illustrate the situation and to indicate the resourcefulness of the curator, let us follow his footsteps. The present curator visited the Department on one of his periodical visits to Des Moines, having transferred his activities from the *Iowa State Register* under James S. Clarkson to the *Sioux City Journal* under George D. Perkins. Mr. Aldrich explained to him his desire to secure newspaper publicity for his project for a historical building. He could get fine publicity through the Des Moines newspapers, of which there were four, but to do so would almost certainly react against his plans. He knew there were jealousies that

would decry the suggestion as merely another evidence of the selfishness of the people at the capital city.

The upshot of it was that upon return to his desk in the editorial rooms of the *Journal* the present writer prepared a journalistic boost for the movement, and Mr. Perkins used it as an editorial. Mr. Aldrich made that the basis of a statewide campaign and held it up as evidence that the move was something that did not originate in the capital city. The ruse worked, and Mr. Aldrich went before the next legislature asking for money because of a demand that came from all over the state.

The Twenty-Sixth General Assembly, in an act approved April 17, 1896, authorized the purchase of ground for a "memorial, historical and art building" and made an appropriation to start the work. The act was defective, but the next year when the same legislature met in special session for another purpose the act was repealed and another substituted, under which the work was commenced. True to form the legislature had made an appropriation entirely too small, and from time to time more money had to be secured by dint of hard begging and weary lobbying.

On the site of the present Des Moines Public Library, the State of Iowa owned a small building on the west bank of the Des Moines river which was used as an armory for the National Guard. This was sold to provide purchase money for the ground for the new historical building. The site bought was that of the old home of Harrison Lyon, one of the men who secured the location of the state capitol in Des Moines by donation of land and money.

The corner stone was laid May 17, 1899, while the work was well under way. John A. Kasson, American statesman and diplomat, delivered a notable address, in which he said:

In recent years the importance of historical collections has been more and more appreciated as aids to education, and it marks an epoch in our local history when the State supplements the general educational advantages of our State university and colleges and schools with the foundation of a historical museum freely accessible to all its people. We may confidently hope that the citizens of the State will ac-

tively cooperate in its development here, as elsewhere in the Union, by liberal contributions to its enlargement. The Historical Department, for which the State is providing a home, will be an important auxiliary in the development of the higher education of our future citizens.

Before the first of the next year the Department had been moved into the new building and a fresh start was made in the task of expanding and enlarging the divisions to meet the growing demand. It seemed to be almost the culmination of the life work of the founder.

The west wing of the Historical Memorial and Art Building, as it had been called, was hardly completed when the Department was compelled to move into it because of pressure for more office space in the capitol. But other appropriations followed and by 1912 the entire building had been completed and occupied. The cost had been about \$375,000, but the value of the material placed therein could only be stated in millions.

The Iowa State Library then and for many years in charge of Johnson Brigham was assigned rooms in the new building, but the law division retained the old quarters near the supreme court rooms. Later the Iowa Library Commission was assigned space for the traveling library and as headquarters for library work out in the state. The medical division of the library also secured a place in the building. There was some embarrassing confusion due to the placing of the Historical Department and the library activities under one board, and especially because the entire membership of the supreme court was on the board, which made it certain that the law division of the library would generally receive first attention. There was an unfortunate mingling of appropriations and no clear division of duties and responsibilities. But all who were concerned were loyal citizens and deeply interested in the work, and it early became evident that if the old story of losses by neglect and inadequate facilities was not to be repeated, there would have to be a great expansion in available rooms and working force.

Not until in 1906 was it recognized that a vital part of the historical museum must ever be the archives, or public records of the transactions of the state with its citizens, and an archives division was established, and definite work on the archives was undertaken.

At some point in the general development of the work, the present historical and genealogical library was definitely separated from the state library and a new line of work commenced. The State library was first a Territorial library, and Congress had bought the books with expectation that they would always remain as a State library for reference purposes. Such of the books as had special significance in Iowa history became the foundation of the new library of the Department. To these were added the books by Iowa authors, the books of science and history that would be useful to students of Iowa and the collection of family histories used in genealogy.

Mr. Aldrich as a newspaper editor quite naturally began early the collection of files of Iowa newspapers and all this was placed under the Historical Department; and now the newspaper division is of surpassing importance to all students of Iowa history and people. The enlargement of the natural history and scientific museum, the addition of war records and materials, and the enlargement of the collection of oil portraits, all followed as a matter of course.

In realization of his own declining strength, Mr. Aldrich had induced Edgar R. Harlan to come into the Department with a view to the succession in the post of curator. Upon the passing of Mr. Aldrich, March 8, 1908, Mr. Harlan continued as he had been before, an assistant actually in charge of the work, and a year later he was made curator and commenced the great work of expanding the Department much as planned by the founder but along many new lines.

Edgar Ruby Harlan was suited to the task as perhaps no one else at that time. He had grown up in surroundings that suggested the romance of Iowa history. He had studied law at Drake university and opened a law office

in Keosauqua. He had married, and his wife was daughter of a venerated pioneer of Van Buren County. Mr. Harlan was elected county attorney. But he was interested in history and helped his father-in-law, George C. Duffield, in the preparation of some articles for *The Annals of Iowa*. Mr. Aldrich and Mr. Harlan quite naturally came together, and the latter made the sacrifice of giving up a promising career at the law for the harder and less remunerative labors of a historical collector and compiler.

Curator Harlan was familiar with every detail of the work when he was given full charge, under a sympathetic board and state officials who understood the value of historical records. Mr. Harlan had a vision that went far beyond the confines of his growing department. He added to every division. He secured more portraits, more books, more manuscripts, and everything. He became tremendously interested in the Mesquakie Indians living in Iowa, the remnant of the Foxes and a few Sauks, and he not only secured a splendid collection of Indian handiwork but gathered the stories of the Indians themselves and stored away a vast amount of material, the worth of which will be better known in later years.

Mr. Harlan traveled about the state a great deal in search of information and became deeply impressed with the need and the possibility of a vast system of state parks. He actively entered into the movement to create such a system and was for years secretary of the park board engaged in starting this work. His foresight led to the making of many of the parks and his untiring energy was largely responsible for the system and the general conservation movement of the state.

To Mr. Harlan is due a large part of the credit for the enlargement of the state capitol grounds. The state house had been completed in 1886 but by reason of the expansion of Des Moines in other directions the surroundings of the same were of a poor kind and in many respects a disgrace to the State. Mr. Harlan joined with others in a move to change this situation. A hard fight was necessary to

secure the authority for the enlargement, and after it was done there was much bitterness and an effort to make use of the improvement for political purposes. But in the end the capitol park was enlarged to about ninety acres and it is now the pride of all Iowa people.

In this work, Mr. Harlan had the active and effective support of Geo. W. Clarke, who had been elected governor.

Mr. Harlan was fortunate in having the confidence of the late Gen. Grenville M. Dodge, distinguished civil war commander and the engineer for construction of the Union Pacific Railroad. His official records and the gifts that marked his notable career are in the Department. It is a very valuable collection and a room is set apart for this alone. Through the gifts of Gen. Dodge there was built on the capitol grounds the beautiful Allison monument. A fine portrait of the General adorns the Department library.

Another room set apart is the Emerson Hough room, with valuable material contributed by that Iowa author. Mr. Harlan also fitted up the Davenport room, with excellent articles of historical value, the gift of members of the family of founders of the City of Davenport.

Publication of the quarterly journal of historical information, *The Annals of Iowa*, had been taken up after abandonment for a time, by Mr. Aldrich, and Mr. Harlan continued this with much ability. He called to his assistance, David C. Mott, who was a veteran newspaper man who had served in the legislature from two different counties. He maintained the high character of the publication and added to the historical collections.

The archives division was always a problem. Under Cassius C. Stiles, the state records were rescued from the hidden places and an orderly system adopted that has been the pattern elsewhere. Now other states are building up archives departments and the United States government has engaged in the same work. Iowa has a splendid collection of the records of census enumerations commencing in territorial days and these have become precious.

The growth of patriotic organizations and the calls for

information as to ancestors of the Revolutionary or Colonial times, indicated need for developing a good library of genealogy and family history. This task fell to Alice Marple, who entered upon it with tremendous zeal and enthusiasm, with the result that the Department now has a library of genealogy that is consulted not alone by Iowa people but by those from states far to the east or the west.

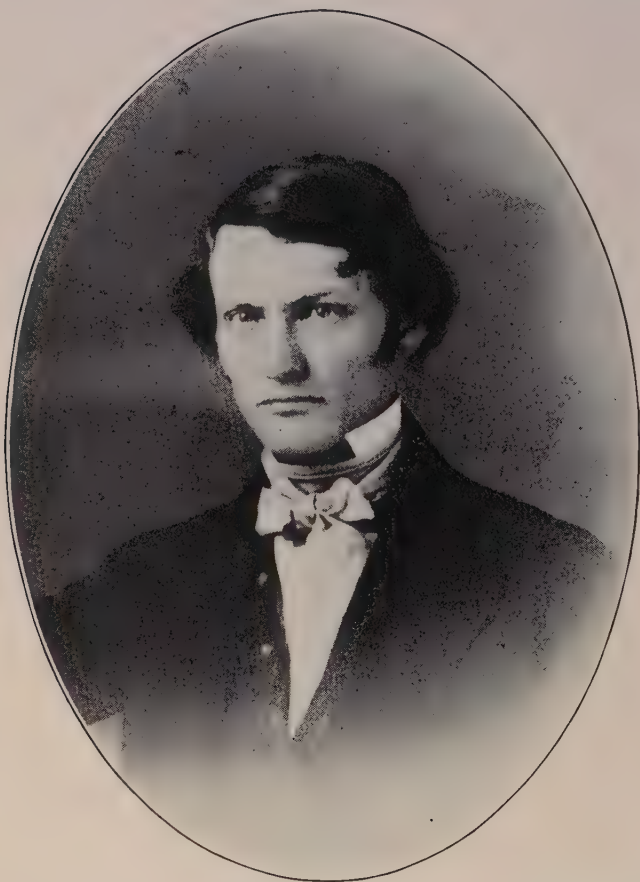
The museum of natural history and science was in charge of Joseph Steppan for many years, and it is a mine of information for students of bird and animal life, geology and archeology, Indian customs and equipment, military affairs, guns, weapons, pioneer implements and utensils; and this mine is being worked every week by school and college students from all parts of the state.

In addition to those mentioned already the Department has had the services of Ellen D. Spaulding, Mary B. Whitcomb, Alice M. Steele, Martha Watson, Ida M. Huntington and Halla M. Rhode in various capacities and all contributed much to the collection.

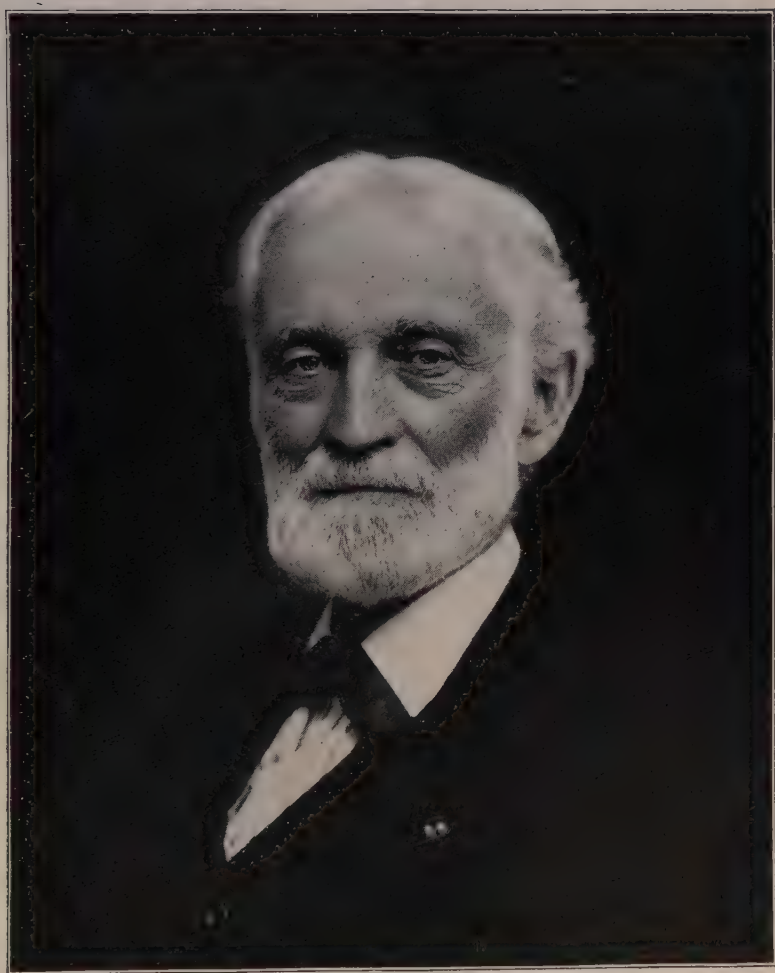
The newspaper collection got an early start and it is especially fine in the files of early state newspapers. There has been neither money nor available room for properly caring for this collection, and it is inevitable that resort must be had to the filming process to keep the record as desired.

In the work of enlarging the portrait gallery of eminent men and women of Iowa, the curators engaged in much personal work, with the result that Iowa has a wonderful collection of these portraits. The help of many volunteers contributed to this splendid gallery.

Mr. Harlan continued as curator until March, 1937, and he lived in retirement until July, 1941. Mr. Aldrich and Mr. Harlan piloted the Department for full forty-five years. The one could properly be called the founder and the other the builder of the Department. In the brief period when Professor Benj. F. Shambaugh, of Iowa City, was nominally curator, the work was actually in charge of Mr. Harlan. For two years after Mr. Harlan's retirement, O. E. Klingaman was curator, and he carried on in the spirit of the founders



CHARLES ALDRICH
As A Young Man



CHARLES ALDRICH
As Curator of the Iowa Historical Department

and gave special attention to the scientific features of the work.

For many years the board of trustees in charge of the Department was composed of the members of the supreme court and several elective state officials. Many of these gave much personal attention to the Department, so far as possible consistent with other duties. Without the sympathy and active cooperation of the board members the progress achieved would have been much less.

In the formative time of the Department there were many men of Iowa who voluntarily gave of their time and influence for the upbuilding of the Department. Benjamin F. Gue, who had been Lieutenant Governor, and an editor of much influence, became assistant to Mr. Aldrich on formation of the Department. Any list of those who gave valuable help would of necessity be incomplete.

But many public men did give material help. Col. C. H. Gatch of Des Moines, fathered the founding of the Department while he was state senator. Former Lieutenant Governor Matt Parrott of Waterloo, and R. G. Clark of Webster City were faithful friends. Edwin H. Conger, distinguished diplomat, showed marked favors. George E. Roberts while director of the mint gave a valuable collection of presidential medals. Governor William Larrabee and his wife were invaluable friends. Charles M. Remey, of Washington, D. C., gave valuable material regarding his father, the first navy admiral born west of the Mississippi, and also much material relating to his grandfather, Charles Mason, first chief justice of the Territory of Iowa. Others whose favors counted for much were Tacitus Hussey, C. J. A. Ericson, Ed Wright, Robert Finkbine, A. B. Cummins, James S. Clarkson, John F. Lacy, William S. Kenyon, T. S. Parvin.

The Department secured a valuable historic film showing the history of the 168th Iowa regiment of the Rainbow Division, commencing with the organization of the unit at the State Fair grounds, its service in France in the World War, and the return home. Within the last year, by favor of Governor George A. Wilson and a committee of the vet-

erans of the Rainbow Division, this old film has been made over into a sound film, in great demand.

Under the Act of Reorganization of 1939, the board of trustees having full control of the Department was made to consist of only three persons, the Governor of the State, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and a member of the Supreme Court. The court ordered that the chief justice should be the member of the board of trustees, which causes a rotation and change once each half year. The trustees are also a board of management for the other state libraries.

The reorganized board of trustees of the Iowa State Department of History and Archives, as it was now called, in March, 1939, elected the writer to be the curator.

The addition of the name "archives" to the official title of the State Historical Department was to emphasize the close relation of the entire department to the archives and all the archival material not previously lost. Several of the governors had called the attention of the legislature to the need of an archives department and a building in which to keep the material. The space available in the state historical building for archives was never sufficient, and long ago it was a crying need that an archives building be erected. When the legislature adopted the plan for the state capitol extension and fixed by law the location of buildings, an archives division was included, which would be an annex to the historical building. No appropriation was made for same, however, because of the insistent demands of groups seeking other recognition.

The biennial report of the Department for 1938-1940 strongly stressed the need of more working and storage room for the archives. The books, papers, letters and other material were accumulating rapidly. The vacant places in the attic and basement of the capitol had been filled, various tunnels for heating pipes contained tons of material, every closet and nook in the historical building was crammed with papers and there were several rented rooms used for storage or for work. A building for the

proper keeping of archives must be specially constructed for that purpose and not otherwise. Such a structure should be entirely different from an office building and conditioned for the safety and preservation of papers and books. Iowa is now far behind many other states.

A partial recognition of the archive problem was made by the legislative retrenchment and reform committee, in securing on a rental basis the use of the "John A. Kasson Memorial Hall", only a block from the historical building. It was taken over for the use of the department in February, 1942. It will serve well as a work room for many of the projects being carried on under the direction of the Department and some of the material from the various offices can be placed there, but not all. At best it will be only slight relief from the pressure for more room for the business of the state in this special field.

There is a certain appropriateness in the taking over of the "Kasson Building" as a part of the State Historical Department. No one ever showed more interest in the Department than did Mr. Kasson. He delivered a notable address at the laying of the corner stone. He gave a magnificent portrait of himself to the art gallery. His personal correspondence is in the department. He was a great American diplomat and helped write the platform on which Lincoln was first elected. He gave the funds for the building of the structure now taken over, having planned it first for a community house under control of the neighboring church. Certainly if Mr. Kasson could have had his wish he would have asked for nothing better than to have the building he caused to be erected used for the historical work of Iowa.

The State Historical Department, as it has always been called, occupies a building declared by many to be the most beautiful of any public building in Iowa. It does not occupy all of the building, owing to the lack of office space in the capitol or elsewhere. The Department has grown in magnitude far beyond the dreams of its founders and this growth has been largely the result of persistent and indefatigable labor on the part of Curators Aldrich and Harlan,

almost always working under the handicap of insufficient funds and facilities.

Before the Department was established there had been irreparable loss to the state by dispersion or loss of valuable records. Much valuable matter was gathered up and sent to other states or to places where its care has not been possible. By its nature the Department must ever be free from political influence, and neither the trustees in charge nor the curators were in a position to bring pressure for legislative appropriations. The result was that the Department suffered many vicissitudes and especially in its duty as the conservator of public archives there has been gross neglect.

Mr. Aldrich was so deeply in earnest that he gave his time freely to get started and after he had given his valuable collection to the State he was not compensated for the care he gave to the same. When the Department was established and some rooms given him, he was given a salary of \$1,200 a year, and the highest he received was \$1,600 a year. By the time Mr. Harlan was placed in full charge the salary had been increased to \$1,800 a year, and finally by the year 1919 the salary had been increased to \$3,600 a year, which was less than that paid in many other states for similar responsibility. In the period of depression, Curator Harlan took a voluntary reduction to \$2,400 a year, along with a general scaling down of all salaries in his Department amounting to one-third. In 1941 this was raised to \$2,700 a year.

The curator has the custody and care of the building and its collections, and these latter have an actual value estimated at far above a million dollars; and the service in response to calls from an almost infinite variety of sources demands the daily use of a storehouse of information obtained only by years of preparation. Both the founder and the builder of the Department possessed rare qualifications for this important task.

At the beginning, the Department was allowed \$6,000 a year for payment of salaries and support, which was in-

creased when to the Department was added the duty of custodianship of the building. By 1929 the annual allowance was \$49,550.00, and with this sum the Department was able to conduct investigations and make purchases of valuable materials. The depression period brought the annual appropriation down to \$28,979.00, and for the period 1941-3 it is \$30,563.00. At present more floor space is given over in the building than ever before to activities other than the Historical Department, and the custodial work has increased as well as the general activities in historical and museum work.

In the past four years much long neglected work was done through federal agencies, under projects opened by the late Curator Klingaman, including a historical records survey, some valuable compilation and publication of history, the indexing and classifying of state records and the official papers in the Department. The Department has co-operated fully with all the federal agencies and the result is invaluable. However, this has now been discontinued.

The disposition on the part of the public, at least as far as reflected in legislative circles, has been to disregard the commercial value of the Department and to treat it as an interesting but expensive ornament. But it has been demonstrated that the Department has a value entirely apart from its sentimental appeal or historical service.

The availability of the records for use in courts and elsewhere in legal proceedings or investigations has been greatly enhanced by the archives work done in recent years, and it is certain that in actual money value to the State itself the Department is a good investment. The incidence of the war with Japan and Germany has made heavy calls upon the Department for census and other records and the continually growing interest in family history and genealogy to meet the needs of patriotic groups makes heavy drafts on the working force.

The Department is this year, 1942, celebrating its semi-centennial as a state institution. There is much cause for gratification over the progress made in many directions. Perhaps best of all is the general recognition of the Depart-

ment as a part of the general educational system of the state. The number of visitors increases with the years. Many school and college groups of young people visit the building to supplement their facilities for study of Iowa history, pioneering, geology, natural history, Indian life, archeology and natural resources. They come to consult the library and to become familiar with the portraits of the men and women who have built Iowa. They make use of the newspaper files, the historical manuscripts and collections, the records of the state in all lines.

The Aldrich collection remains, however, the very center and heart of the Department. Here the student of American life, and for that matter all Nineteenth century life, can see the handwriting of many of the eminent persons of the past century and a half, with portraits, manuscripts, letters and other material. All this ties in with the splendid library of genealogy and history and the task of getting out *THE ANNALS OF IOWA* quarterly as the state's medium of information on historical matters.

The State Historical Department's first fifty years show accomplishments that are a matter of great pride to the people of Iowa. It is no longer a hobby, it is an institution.

THE TELEPHONE IN IOWA

BY CHARLES C. DEERING

In 1875 Alexander Graham Bell, Scotsman by birth, American by adoption, invented the electric telephone and applied for a patent.

Bell was a teacher of acoustics and a student of electricity.

His invention came as he was seeking to devise a multiple telegraph.

The apparatus he made in 1875 transmitted sounds, recognizable as the human voice, but the first complete and understandable sentence was transmitted in March, 1876, a few days after his patent had been granted March 7, 1876.

Bell's device was for all practical purposes, the receiver used today. The user spoke in a loud voice into this piece of apparatus and then placed it to his ear and waited for the response—the next step was to use two of these pieces of apparatus as one set, one as a transmitter and one as a receiver.

A company was formed to manufacture telephones and to develop their use. This company determined not to sell telephones, to lease them only, and the original company and its successors adhered to this policy until comparatively recent years.

The original telephone was a good receiver but a poor transmitter; however, more efficient transmitters and also signaling devices and then switchboards were developed so that the telephone became a practical thing.

Many people scoffed at the thought of its ever becoming more than a scientific toy, but Bell was a man of vision, and made this remarkable prophecy in March, 1878, only two months after the opening of the first telephone exchange at New Haven, Connecticut.

He said, in part:

The great advantage it possesses over every other form of electrical apparatus consists in the fact that it requires no skill to operate the instrument. All other telegraph machines produce signals which require to be translated by experts, and such instruments are therefore extremely limited in their application, but the telephone actually speaks, and for this reason it can be utilized for nearly every purpose for which speech is employed. . . .

At the present time we have a perfect network of gas pipes and water pipes throughout our large cities. We have main pipes laid under the streets communicating by side pipes with the various dwellings, enabling the members to draw their supplies of gas and water from a common source.

In a similar manner, it is conceivable that cables of telephone wires could be laid underground, or suspended overhead, communicating by branch wires with private dwellings, country houses, shops, manufactories, etc., etc., uniting them through the main cable with a central office where the wires could be connected as desired, establishing direct communication between any two places in the city. Such a plan as this, though impracticable at the present moment, will, I firmly believe, be the outcome of the introduction of the telephone to the public. Not only so, but I believe in the future, wires will unite the head offices of the telephone company in different cities, and a man in one part of the country may communicate by word of mouth with another in a distant place

In conclusion I would say that it seems to me that the telephone should immediately be brought prominently before the public, as a means of communication between bankers, merchants, manufacturers, wholesale and retail dealers, dock companies, water companies, police offices, fire stations, newspaper offices, hospitals and public buildings, and for use in railway offices, in mine and (diving) operations.

Agreements should also be speedily concluded for the use of the telephone in the Army and Navy and by the Postal Telegraph Department, although there is a great field for the telephone in the immediate present, I believe there is still greater in the future.

In view of the conditions in those days, this was a most remarkable statement.

The first public showing of the telephone was at the

Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia in 1876, where it was shown in an obscure location and attracted little attention until visited by Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, who had previously known Bell. From that time on it was exhibited in a conspicuous place and was seen by thousands.

The first commercial telephone exchange was placed in service in January, 1878, at New Haven, Connecticut. It had eight lines and twenty-one telephones.

The powerful Western Union Telegraph Company, recognized the telephone as a competitor, organized the Gold and Stock Telephone Company and entered the telephone field using a transmitter invented by Thomas A. Edison. It built many exchanges.

The Bell Company claimed patent infringement and brought suit. Before a court decision was reached the Western Union settled with the Bell Company, and agreed to retire from the telephone field. This was in November, 1879.

The Bell Company agreed to buy the telephones and exchanges which the telegraph company had built. The Western Union at that time owned fifty-five exchanges with 56,000 telephones. Four of these exchanges were in Iowa.

In April, 1880, the American Bell Telephone Company was organized and became an operating company with power to hold stock in other companies.

In 1885 the American Bell Telephone Company organized a subsidiary, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, to build and operate long distance lines to interconnect the various regional Bell companies.

In 1900 the American Telephone and Telegraph Company succeeded the American Bell as the parent company.

EARLY INSTALLATIONS IN IOWA

Quite a little of the very early use of the telephone was private line service, to connect one's home and place of business, or hotel and railway station.

So generally, telephones for this private line service, as well as telephones for exchange service, were rented from the parent Bell Company.

As early as 1879 there were a number of these private lines in Iowa. One was in Dubuque, where lumberman Moore had a line connecting his office and lumber yard. His son, A. A. Moore, went to Boston and brought back these two telephones.

A. A. Moore later established himself in the lumber business in Marshalltown. He was one of the organizers of the Marshalltown Telephone Company, and was long prominent in the independent telephone field in this state. He was one of the organizers of the Iowa Telephone Association a trade organization of the independent companies.

Another of these early private lines was at Cedar Rapids and connected the stores of H. C. Waites and Pope & Billaus.

At Boone A. J. Barkley had a line connecting his office with the Court House at Boonesboro, two miles distant.

The first commercial exchange in Iowa was built by the Western Union Telegraph Company at Keokuk. It opened for business in September, 1878. The Western Union also built exchanges at Des Moines, Davenport and Ottumwa.

The first private telephone exchange in Iowa, and perhaps in the United States, connected the Burlington fire stations in November, 1878.

The first Bell exchange in Iowa was opened at Dubuque in June, 1879.

The first telephones in Des Moines were installed prior to the building of an exchange. They were on a line connecting F. M. Hubbell's office at Fifth and Mulberry with his home on Fifth, north of Grand.

Davenport a few years later, in 1880, counted ninety-six telephones "in actual connection with the central office." "On yesterday," the proud Davenport Gazette reported, February 21, "orders were taken for six more, and still other applications are known to be awaiting the substitution of the present instruments for those of the Bell Telephone Company." Subscribers in Davenport had the privilege of conversing with users in Rock Island and Moline "day and night."

In September, 1880, Oskaloosa business men were look-

ing forward to receiving a "bell telephone system." "Such a system would be greatly to the advantage of our business and professional men," the Oskaloosa *Herald* asserted on the ninth, "and should be secured."

Earlier in the year, Cedar Rapids boasted of twenty-nine subscribers to the telephones there, and a short while later a line connecting Cedar Rapids and Marion, one of the earliest "toll" lines in the state, was completed, with twenty-five subscribers.

With so few instruments in use, the telephone was for long quite a novelty, and new subscribers had to get acquainted with their uses. The Council Bluffs *Nonpareil* was guilty of more than a little exaggeration in 1880 when it reported that "the telephone is the greatest invention of the age, but this particular age is so well advanced that nothing seems to astonish it, and the 'speaking machine' has come to be a daily use and an absolute necessity in the transaction of business and the affairs of everyday life just as though it was down on the regular programme or 'bill of fare' with the commencement of time itself."¹

Nevertheless, many an individual, like the gentleman "from a neighboring town" reported by the *Nonpareil*, "who had read all about the telephone but never saw it," thought, "he must show himself to be up with the times, and glancing at one of the speaking tubes that extend through the *Nonpareil* office building, gravely remarked: 'I see you have the telephone in use here.' He knew such a thing existed and was willing to run the risk of hitting it by pronouncing the first hole in the wall he saw a telephone and thus prove himself to be familiar with the looks and workings of the wonderful machine."

Not only was its appearance a novelty, but its use was even more so. The Dubuque *Herald* quoted approvingly the New York *World* in March, 1880, which asserted, "there seems to be a popular misapprehension about conversing through a telephone. It is not necessary to roar into the

¹ Council Bluffs *Nonpareil*, quoted in the Dubuque *Herald*, Jan. 17, 1880.

instrument so that you can be heard eight blocks away. The telephone don't [sic] work on that principle. If you are talking to a man don't yell so as to disturb all peaceable citizens. Stand back two or three feet [sic] from the mouth piece of the transmitter and speak slowly and distinctly in your ordinary voice. The telephone is not deaf. Don't cry "hello" in bill board type; rather whisper it minion."

That this caution was necessary to new users is the advice of the following lines:

Do not saw the air too much with your
Mouth, thus: but use all gently;
For in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say)
Whirlwind of your passion you must
Acquire and beget a temperance
Oh, it offends me to the soul
To hear a robustious, periwig-pated fellow
Tear a telephone to tatters, to very
Rags; to split the ears of the boys
At the Central Office, who for the most part
Are capable of nothing but inexplicable
Dumb show and noise—especial noise.
I would have such a fellow whipt
For o'erdoing Termagant
It out herods Herod
Pray you avoid it.

EARLY TOLL LINES

The parent Bell Company licensed several companies to build in various parts of Iowa, and at one time there were at least as many as eighteen such licenses in this state. Seldom were there toll lines connecting the exchanges of these various licensees and often not all of the exchanges of a given licensee were connected together.

The earliest toll lines were of iron, one wire, grounded, with a limit of commercial service of fifty to seventy-five miles; conversations over longer distances were usually repeated by an operator at some intermediate switching point; the strong lunged operator was a prize.

These grounded lines were subject to cross talk and to other electrical interference. One of these grounded toll lines from Boone to Des Moines paralleled for some distance the trolley line running to Valley Junction (now West Des Moines). Users of this toll line alleged that they could hear the conductor on the street car ring up fares.

The grounded toll line was followed by the metallic (two wire) line, and copper with its superior conductivity replaced iron wire. Other advances, notably the telephone repeater, made transcontinental service a reality.

Toll line connections between Iowa cities were thus obviously few in the first years. An early attempt to establish telephonic connections between Council Bluffs and Des Moines in January, 1880, was such important news that the *Dubuque Herald*, on the opposite side of the state, headlined the news as²

A TELEPHONE FEAT
DES MOINES AND COUNCIL BLUFFS PLACED
IN COMMUNICATION BY TELE-
PHONE.

" . . . On Sunday afternoon last a successful telephone connection was made between Council Bluffs and Des Moines, which are nearly 150 miles apart. The wire used was a telegraph wire, with all the instruments "cut out." Manager O'Brien and Assistant Noack of the telephone exchange office at this place, connected a Bell telephone and Blake transmitter with a Des Moines wire at the Rock Island depot. The telegraph operator, Mr. Smith, of the depot office at Des Moines, attached a telephone instrument to his end of the wire, and at 2 o'clock telegraphed Operator Josslyn at the office here that he was ready for 'business.' "

The circuit was then opened and conversations were carried on between the gentlemen in Council Bluffs depot and Mr. Smith at Des Moines, by telephone.

" . . . Altogether the test was quite a success. Mr. Smith said he could hear persons in Council Bluffs and Omaha conversing with each other quite distinctly. The Edison in-

²Ibid

strument is used in Des Moines, while the Bell is used in this city. Had both instruments been Bell the conversation would no doubt have been more distinct. Of course the success of the undertaking was owing to the fact that all the telegraph wires, or nearly all, were quiet at the time. Had they been working the "sympathy" between them would have been too great to distinguish the words clearly. In long distance the telephone wire will have to be placed by itself, and nothing will prevent a conversation between Council Bluffs and Des Moines or any other distant cities. The success of Sunday's feat clearly demonstrates the fact that before long the telephone will be used as a means of communication between cities in all parts of the state. With a little more exertion we could have the pleasure of sitting in Council Bluffs, and listening to the proceedings of the legislature at Des Moines."

In the pioneer days of the eighties quite a number of telegraph men became Bell telephone managers.

Another of the early toll lines was built from Des Moines to Winterset. The *Iowa State Register* of November 5, 1882, told of the opening of this line and said that service would be furnished free for one day, and also, "to accommodate all who desire to converse from their Des Moines homes to Winterset, little books, costing \$5.00 and \$10.00 will be provided, in the form of a thousand mile ticket; these must be left at the central office and a strip will be torn out for each 'talk' which the owner has with Winterset. Parties without books will be required to go to the central office in this city to do their talking."

Try and imagine asking today's subscriber to go to the central office to make an out-of-town call!

In those early days the building of toll lines was financed, in part, by the sale of such coupon books, though usually the purchaser retained possession of the book, and coupons in payment of tolls were taken out when bills were paid.

Later, in the nineties, the independent companies financed the building of much toll line in this way, sometimes selling these coupons at a discount.

EARLY EQUIPMENT

The earliest exchanges serving, principally, the business district of a town, used open iron wire strung over roofs; poles were used when no other supports were available.

Native poles were frequently used for early construction work. These poles were usually short lived, although a Missouri man, who used a lot of native poles, alleged that they hardened with age, and jokingly said that in some cases the poles would last longer than the holes in which they were set.

Northern and western cedar have been favored timber for poles for a long time. Treated pine poles are used in increasing numbers and have a very long life.

Previous to the use of cable, the open telephone wires to the central office sometimes terminated on cross arms bolted across the office window and then insulated wires entered the building through a hole in the window casing. Sometimes the open wires terminated on the roof on cross arms bolted together into a square rack which was called a "tower"; from the tower they entered the building via the skylight.

Alley construction sometimes was on long timbers reaching across the alley and supported by poles at either end. This kind of construction in the alleys usually supported the electric wires also.

All of this old style construction was unsightly, hazardous and interfered with fire fighting.

In cities and towns open wires have given way to aerial and underground cable, except for minor construction. Even in the country considerable cable is being used.

Cable is used on important toll routes.

Experiments are being made trying to find an inexpensive insulation for use on wire for farm line construction; a wire than can cheaply be plowed into the ground where it will be free from storm and mechanical damage. One of the problems is to find an insulation that will not be attacked by gophers.

For many years all telephones were of the magneto (hand crank) type and with local batteries in the transmitter circuit. Prior to the invention of dry batteries these local batteries were of some wet, acid type which occasionally did some damage. They were always messy and expensive and required a large cabinet to provide room for the batteries.

In the early days of these magneto telephones some exchange instructions told the subscriber to turn the crank to get central, then await an answering ring before taking down the receiver, then give central the called party's number (or more likely his name), then the subscriber cranked again to ring the called telephone.

These early instructions usually told the subscriber not to use his telephone during a thunder storm.

In this connection note the following from the *Muscatine Journal* of July 28, 1881:

It would be well if the telephone subscribers would bear in mind that it is dangerous to use the telephone during a storm. At every flash the indicators fall and it is impossible for the young lady operator to tell who calls. Besides in using the ear trumpet in the ear, it is easily charged with electricity, and she is in great danger of being knocked down. The same applies to subscribers too.

In some exchanges the operator rang every subscriber each morning and said—"Morning test, ring off."

The telephone booth of the "gay nineties" was quite different from today's edition. It was usually very much larger and quite ornate, of golden oak, double walled, with glass in two sides and door, and silk drapes between the inner and outer glass.

The toll line company connecting with an exchange frequently furnished such a booth for use at the central office.

The following tale is supposed to be authentic:

A business man in a small Iowa town decided that the town needed telephones and so he built an exchange. Later he built one of the better houses of the town and planned to put the telephone switchboard in his house. He



HIGH TELEPHONE POLES, 1880'S
Walnut Street, Des Moines, looking West from Fifth Street.

called on the toll line company to furnish him one of these ornate booths; having one, not too far away, it was shipped him all set up (not knocked down as was usual for shipment) in a box car. Mr. Telephone man put the booth on a stone boat and a team of horses hauled it to his residence; a man stood on either side to prevent its tipping over. There was a small gathering of women at a house near Mr. Telephone man's house. As the caravan neared its destination one of the women spied it and called out — "Well, look at that; Mr. Telephone man has the best house in town, now take a look at the privy he's getting!"

It is interesting to note that several small automatic exchanges were installed in Iowa before the development of the dial telephone. In one type the telephone had three push buttons; to call number 234 you pushed the hundreds button twice, the tens button three times and the units button four times.

None of these older types of automatics proved dependable and none of them lasted long.

Later the automatic or dial equipment was greatly improved and it now serves many large as well as very small exchanges.

Seventy-four of these dial exchanges are in operation now.

Thirty-five and forty years ago cities and towns had a great deal of open wire construction. Pole lines of fifty foot and sixty foot poles with many cross arms, ten wires per cross arm, were common. Almost every old time line-man at sometime or other had his picture taken astride the top cross of a sixty foot pole.

About the period mentioned above, a line of these tall poles bringing in the toll lines from the west was located on the north side of Locust Street in Des Moines. It ended between Fourth and Fifth Streets. When the Chamberlain Hotel was built, one of those big poles stood almost directly in front of the south entrance to the hotel. Mr. Brown, who was to manage the hotel, naturally wanted this pole moved,

and there was no question but that it should be moved; further Mr. Brown thought the big wood pole was unsightly, and so after some discussion of the subject he agreed to pay for a structural steel pole.

BELL COMPANIES

From the latter part of 1879, when the Western Union Telegraph Company had withdrawn from the telephone field, until 1893, when the fundamental Bell patents expired, the Bell Company had the field to itself. It had its struggles and growing pains and difficulties in financing.

A long list of men are entitled to credit for the progress made by the Bell Company in this state up to this point. Among those prominent in these years of pioneer work were W. A. Leary, George B. Engle, Jr., E. T. Keim, D. H. Ogden, E. A. Clark, E. E. Thompson, Chas. E. Hall and Geo. E. McFarland.

Great credit is due these two last named for their perseverance through the struggles and vicissitudes of the pioneer stages of the business; they also carried on through the years of competition that followed and played an important part in the consolidations which eliminated the dual exchange situations and brought about the conditions which prevail today, complete interconnection regardless of property ownership.

In 1893 there were three Bell companies in Iowa operating sixty exchanges with less than ten thousand telephones. Des Moines had less than nine hundred telephones.

The possibilities of a large telephone development had not yet been seen; rates for exchange service were high; business houses made up the majority of the subscribers list; doctors and some others had residence telephones.

In some exchanges the printed bills stated that the charge included a \$20.00 royalty to the parent Bell company.

With high rates and small lists of subscribers the value of the service was limited; so much so that now and then

an exchange had to close for lack of patronage. In at least one case (Perry) three attempts were made before the telephone exchange came to stay.

This is a partial list of exchanges built by Bell licensees in those early days. Licensees' name and year service began are stated:-

Keokuk	Western Union Telegraph Co.	1878
Dubuque	Keim and Ogden Co.	1879
Ottumwa	Western Union Telegraph Co.	1879
Davenport	" " " "	1879
Des Moines	" " " "	1879
Council Bluffs	Omaha Electric Co.	1879
Sioux City	Sioux City Telephone Ex. Co., Inc.	1880
Glenwood	Glenwood Telephone Exchange Co.	1880
Maquoketa	Jackson County Bell Telephone Co.	1880
Cedar Rapids	Hawkeye Telephone Co.	1880
Clinton	Clinton and Lyons Bell Telephone Co.	1880
Oskaloosa	Iowa Telephone & Telegraph Co.	1881
Mt. Vernon	Hawkeye Telephone Co.	1881
McGregor	Iowa and Minnesota Telephone Co.	1881
Indianola	Iowa Telephone & Telegraph Co.	1881
Iowa City	" " " "	1881
Muscatine	Hawkeye Telephone Company	1881
Red Oak	Red Oak Telephone Company	1881
Cedar Falls	Hawkeye Telephone Co.	1881
Waterloo	" " "	1881
Winterset	" " "	1881
Webster City	Iowa & Minnesota Telephone Co.	1881
Vinton	Iowa Telephone & Telegraph Co.	1882
Atlantic	Iowa Union Telephone & Telegraph Co.	1882
Boone	Hawkeye Telephone Co.	1882
Shenandoah	Iowa Union Telephone & Telegraph Co.	1883
Fort Madison	Iowa Union Telephone & Telegraph Co.	1883
West Union	Iowa & Minnesota Telephone Co.	1883
Cherokee	Iowa & Minnesota Telephone Co.	1883
Colfax	Iowa Union Telephone & Telegraph Co.	1883
Ames	Ames and Nevada Telephone Co.	1883

With the expiration of the fundamental Bell patents in 1893, manufacturing companies were formed to make independent telephones and switchboards and the era of competition started.

RISE OF THE INDEPENDENTS

Perhaps the first independent telephone exchange in Iowa was built at Jefferson by Chas. G. Cockerill, operating under the name of the Cockerill Telephone Company. In 1891 the City Council of Jefferson passed a resolution granting the Cockerill Telephone Company the right to occupy the streets and alleys with pole lines. In 1893 Cockerill built toll lines to Farlin, Churdan and Scranton.

In the early days of independent telephony in this state a number of telegraph operators, doctors and druggists were organizers of telephone companies. The telegraph operators were interested because of the kinship between the telephone and the telegraph; they had some knowledge of electrical communication. Examples — E. H. Martin of Webster City, Geo. N. Bandy of Perry and Chas. E. Wells of Boone.

Doctors probably became interested for they saw its time saving advantages, and time saving is often life saving. Examples—Dr. A. A. Deering, Boone; Dr. C. F. Bennett and Dr. G. G. Bickley, Waterloo; Dr. G. W. Greaves and Dr. Chas. McAllister, Spencer; Dr. W. F. Cram, Sheldon.

Druggists' interest, it is believed came about as follows: When a toll line ran into a town where no exchange service was available, the toll line owner was anxious to have the toll station in an establishment that was open long hours; often that place was the drug store. Then the druggist sent a messenger for the called party. Sometimes a private telephone line was installed to reach a frequently called person; hence the druggist well knew the needs for exchange service. Examples — B. C. Way, Britt; Clويد H. Smith, Odebolt; J. W. Stewart, Grimes; Theo. I. Swift, State Center.

Independent telephone companies were organized by citizens and local capital built exchanges (usually these were single exchange companies) in most of the cities and towns where the Bell Company had exchanges, and also in a great many towns which the Bell Company had thought too small to support an exchange.

These independent companies universally had low rates; they had no patent royalties to pay; they were inexperienced and had little idea of maintenance costs; none of depreciation.

Competition ran wild.

In dual exchange situations rates were slashed; often residence telephones were free to business subscribers. Sometimes bitter feelings were engendered between various partisans.

For many years no Bell company would connect its toll lines to an independent exchange (even in a non-competitive situation) unless the independent company leased Bell transmitters and receivers.

March 18, 1896, the following men met at the Commercial Exchange, Des Moines, and organized the Iowa Telephone Association, a trade organization of the Independent Companies of the state:

E. H. Martin	Webster City
J. L. Stevens	Boone
C. E. Wells	"
W. H. Crooks	"
A. A. Moore	Marshalltown
C. E. Greaf	Eldora
C. F. Bennett	Waterloo
C. G. Cockerill	Jefferson
Geo. N. Bandy	Perry
F. A. Ferguson	Clearfield
H. Baum	"
F. A. Dwinell	Sioux City
H. O. Woodruff	" "
A. T. Hess	Des Moines
S. T. Slade	Oskaloosa
Ed. K. Himes	"
W. A. Hauts	Parker, South Dakota
J. E. Keelyn	Chicago

A constitution was approved, resolutions were adopted and committees were appointed.

One of the resolutions recommended certain rates for long distance service. Another "Resolved that this Association deems it but just that telephones used in railway stations shall be paid for at the same rate as business telephones." Later the legislature made it compulsory for railway companies "to install a telephone in each passenger or freight depot."

The officers elected at this first meeting were:

President	E. H. Martin
Vice President	A. T. Hess
Secretary	Ed. K. Himes
Treasurer	S. T. Slade

The Iowa Telephone Association changed its name to the Iowa Independent Telephone Association in 1906, and still represents the independent telephone companies. It is one of the older trade associations of the state.

In those earlier days of the Association when there was much bitter feeling between the Bell and the Independents, some of the Association meetings had a sergeant-at-arms guard the door lest a Bell spy hear what was being said.

Following is a very incomplete list of other prominent pioneer Independent telephone men of the state:

J. S. Bellamy	Knoxville
P. C. Holdoegel	Rockwell City
J. H. Shoemaker	Waterloo
A. T. Averill	Cedar Rapids
C. M. McFatridge	Moravia
D. M. Griswold	Winterset
Otto Wettstein	La Porte City
D. N. Smith	Clearfield
W. H. Durin	Cedar Rapids
M. McFarlin	Des Moines
H. E. Teachout	Des Moines

In the early part of this century the largest independent company was the Western Electric Telephone System, whose

head office was at Mason City. It was headed by B. C. Way (now a Director of the Northwestern Bell Telephone Company) and Truman Potter. The Western Electric had a number of exchanges in northern Iowa, and about 3000 miles of toll line in northern Iowa, southern Minnesota and eastern South Dakota. None of this property was in competition with the Bell Company.

The Western Electric was the first independent company in this part of the country to connect up with the Bell toll lines.

In large numbers of these competitive, dual exchange situations, the Bell Company was able to continue in business only because it afforded its subscribers long distance service.

The independent companies built some toll lines, but they were limited in extent and did not afford as much service as the public wanted.

Both the Bell and the independents lacked capital for a rapidly expanding business. The independents had to depend on local capital which was hard to get in sufficient amounts and so earnings went back into plant and often no dividends were paid; this in turn made it difficult to interest investors.

The parent Bell Company reduced its royalties almost to the vanishing point in competitive situations. Its investors were reluctant to put more money into a western subsidiary where competition was rampant and no dividends were in sight.

Neither side knew how hard up the other was.

This competitive situation continued for many years. There were towns with as many as three exchanges; one Bell, one Commercial Independent, and a Farmers Mutual.

In 1905 there were 147 Iowa towns with two exchanges.

During this period the public became fed up with these dual exchange situations. To get full service the subscriber must have two telephones; two directories to consult, the ringing of two bells caused confusion, and there were two

bills to pay. In no other line of business is competition such a nuisance and so intolerable.

Due to the public demand and to the economic waste, consolidations took place, starting about 1909. One company would buy out the other and consolidate the exchanges in a town.

In a general way, the company with the most telephones in a town would buy. It took several years to bring about results but in the end all but five of the cities and towns received unified service. In some of these places dual exchanges remain to this day.

These years of competition, bringing low rates, keen solicitation for business, genuine efforts to establish good public relations brought about a development of the business, a saturation point previously undreamed of.

RURAL, FARM PHONES

There was little development of rural telephone service until the advent of the Independent companies.

In the early days solicitation of farmers to take telephone service met with poor response. Many a farmer looked at the telephone just as the business man had done many years earlier and said it might be a nice thing to visit over, but that it had little practical value for him.

However, in the late nineties the telephone was in much more general use in the cities and towns than ever before and a rapid development of rural service took place.

Often the telephone company encouraged groups of farmers to build their own rural lines up to the city limits and there the exchange owner connected and did their switching for a low fee. Such farmer-owned lines are called service station lines or switchers.

The exchange owner was prompted to encourage the farmer to build his own telephone lines because of difficulties in financing; the farmer became interested because he

could furnish part of the labor and keep down first cost and get a switching rate that was much lower than the regular rental.

Most of this sort of development took place during the days of dual exchanges; when the farm line contract expired there was intense rivalry between the two exchange owners to secure the new contract, not because of the revenue it brought in, but because of the influence on the town subscribers.

Hundreds of country schoolhouse meetings were held on these contract renewals; the Bell man and the Independent were given an opportunity to present their arguments and quote switching rates.

This rivalry ended with the passing of the dual exchange situations. There are many of these lines in service today; perhaps 3500 or 4000 of them.

Slowly, gradually, these service station lines turn to the exchange owners to furnish them complete service. In the majority of cases, obviously, farmer-owned lines will not be well maintained and when the time comes for complete rebuilding, the service station line often says to the exchange owner—"You take over, you're in the telephone business."

Some of the early farm lines used the top wire of the fence as a conductor; sometimes they insulated it, often not. Glass bottles were sometimes used as insulators. Often two by fours were used to raise the wires sufficiently high for clearance at gates and highway crossings.

For several decades census figures—we have two sets of census figures; the general census taken every ten years, and the electrical census taken every five years, the last one in 1937—have shown that Iowa has more farm telephones per hundred farms than any other state. The highest saturation was reached in 1920 or soon thereafter; eighty-six telephones per hundred farms.

The depression days of the early twenties brought about a moderate loss of farm telephones, then came gains but

not enough to offset the losses. The depression of the thirties brought about a big loss of farm telephones from which there has not been complete recovery.

Many a telephone man soliciting a former farmer subscriber has been able to prove that the use of the telephone would result in a dollar and cents saving, only to be told by the farmer — "But I want to drive to town."

Will this situation change now that we have a rubber and labor shortage and greater need for conservation?

Prior to 1930 every year had seen an increase in the number of telephones in service. Depressions brought about a slowing down but not a stoppage of gains; but from 1932 to 1935 there were material losses of telephones. So the idea that the telephone business was depression proof was shattered.

Up to the late nineties telephone property in the state was assessed by the Executive Council, and taxes were paid to the state, and went into its general fund.

Then the law was changed. The property was still assessed by the Executive Council (by the Tax Commission after its formation); then the average value per mile of line ascertained and this valuation certified out to the county auditors, and by them spread into the districts where the pole lines are located. Taxes are then paid at the prevailing millage rates.

Telephone wires are used for other communication purposes than talking; much of the leased wire telegraph services are over telephone wires, such as press and brokers circuits and teletypewriter service.

The broadcasting networks connect their stations with leased telephone wires.

March 2, 1942, the War Production Board issued an order "To Limit the Use of Scarce and Critical Materials by the Wire Telephone Industry."

Some of the provisions of this order are:

Discontinue the conversion of manual offices to dial offices, or the conversion of one type of manual office to another type.

Discontinue the replacement of existing wall and desk types of subscriber's instruments with hand sets, except in any instance where any such subscriber's instrument is beyond repair.

Discontinue the installation of extension telephones in residences except when such extensions are necessary for the use of those charged with responsibilities for the public health, welfare or security.

Employ party-line service in those instances where party-line installation will conserve scarce and critical materials.

Discontinue replacements or additions to existing plant for the betterment or relocations of such plant, except to replacements essential to the maintenance or protection of service.

This conservation order of the War Production Board is, perhaps, only the first step in the curtailment of telephone service for civilian users due to the extreme and ever growing shortages of copper and other scarce metals and materials.

The next telephone service curtailment order may be more drastic and stringent and may impose some degree of actual rationing of telephone service to civilian users who are not connected with or important to war effort.

Up to the time of this writing the telephone companies have had a low priority rating for materials and supplies needed for maintenance and repairs and no priority rating for plant additions and extensions, unless connected in some way with war work. This condition prevails in spite of the fact that in this modern world the need of good communication service to facilitate war and defense efforts, civilian defense, public morale and everything connected with it, seems to be recognized by all.

Five hundred and thirty-eight companies operate 935 exchanges in Iowa and serve over 555,000 telephones.

In point of saturation, Iowa stands fourth among the states. Only California, Illinois and New York have more telephones per hundred of population, and in rural development Iowa ranks highest.

—Charles C. Deering, secretary-treasurer of the Iowa Independent Telephone Association since 1913, has been active in telephone work since 1898. He is also the son of one of the leaders in the development of the independent telephone system in Iowa.

A RADIO PIONEER

WOI - AMES, 1923-1940

BY A. G. WOOLFRIES

Iowa State College was actively engaged in the radio field for many years before the advent of broadcasting. The Electrical Engineering Department, under Professor F. A. Fish, maintained a highly efficient amateur station operating under the call letters 9YI. This station was in operation prior to 1914. The 240 cycle note of the synchronous spark transmitter was well known throughout the middle-west before the beginning of voice transmission.

When the first regular broadcasts from KDKA had demonstrated the possibilities of this means of communication, the Electrical Engineering Department determined to construct a broadcasting station. Mr. Harmon B. Deal, a graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was chosen to supervise the project. He was assisted by one of the engineering students, A. G. Woolfries, later chief announcer of the station. Early in October of 1921 work was begun on a fifty watt set—a "super-power" outfit for the time. Plans were later changed to increase this output to 100 watts. With this power, the transmitter first went on the air the evening of November 21, 1921, using a wave length of 375 meters and the call letters 9YI. The following April (1922) the call WOI was assigned by the Radio Division of the Department of Commerce.

Almost immediately upon its inception, the station inaugurated a schedule of service reports consisting largely of weather forecasts and livestock market news. The forecasts were sent by commercial wire from the United States Weather Bureau. The market reports were copied from a long wave code broadcast by NAJ, the government station at the Naval Training School, near Chicago. This service from NAJ was continued for nearly three years,

after which it was supplemented by commercial telegraph reports. In July, 1926, the United States Department of Agriculture leased wire service was made available.

It is interesting to remember that at this time, all broadcasting stations operated on a wave length of 360 meters—in theory at least. Actually, it was the custom for stations to deviate slightly above or below this channel according to the severity of interference. However, all government reports were transmitted on 485 meters. Thus, when a weather report was to be given, both stations and listeners changed to the longer wave; afterward, scrambling back to 360 meters for the balance of the program.

The 100 watt transmitter proved inadequate to cover the state, so plans were made for a more powerful set. In December, 1923, WOI put into service a 500 watt transmitter—again the "last word" in equipment and power! This outfit gave a fair coverage of the central portion of the state, and was heard in all parts of Iowa under favorable conditions. A small studio was secured—the "new" double button microphones were installed—the schedule was expanded—WOI rapidly forged to the front in midwest radio circles.

Constant expansion within the station soon brought a demand for additional room for studio and transmitter. As a result, a large laboratory adjoining the original quarters was made available. In 1924, this was partitioned into a suite of rooms and the studio moved to its present location. Late the same year, a new 500 watt transmitter was put into service. Provision was made for increasing this power to 750 watts when the necessary permission had been obtained. This permission was forthcoming in August, 1925.

During this time, WOI had far outgrown its original function as an experiment of the Electrical Engineering Department. The station was reorganized in 1925 as a part of the Iowa State College and operated from funds supplied by the Agricultural Extension Service, Engineering Extension Service, and from general college funds, under the direction of Professor D. C. Faber, Director of Engineering

Extension. In October, 1925, Professor W. I. Griffith was named as Program Director, while Professor F. A. Fish remained in charge of the technical side. Within a year, this set-up was simplified by placing the entire station under the direction of Professor Griffith. The following year, 1926, the important market news service of the station was reorganized and augmented when the United States Department of Agriculture installed a leased wire office to supply a comprehensive service of livestock market information. This service, together with a program of music, dramatics, talks, athletic events, and the like gave the station a distinctive program which appealed to a large group of listeners.

WOI was assigned a frequency of 1110 kilocycles in January of 1925. It soon became apparent that the effective coverage area of the station had been materially reduced. To offset this, a 5000 watt transmitter was designed and built by the station staff headed by Ralph Knouf, an Iowa State College graduate who had been employed by the General Electric Company. The new transmitter went into operation in January, 1927. Again WOI boasted one of the most powerful and up-to-date sets in the country. Automatic crystal control of the frequency was one feature which then was used by only eight other stations. In June, 1927, another change in frequency put WOI on the 1130 k.c. channel. This high frequency was made still more undesirable by severe interference from nearby stations on adjacent channels.

The general re-assignment which took place in November, 1928, brought a welcome change to WOI. The station was placed on the 560 k.c. channel to share daylight time with KFEQ, St. Joseph, Missouri. Although the power was reduced to 3500 watts, the resultant coverage was vastly superior to that obtained on the higher frequency. Relations with KFEQ were most friendly, but that station, of commercial necessity, sought a full time license. The latest change, made in November, 1929, licensed the station to operate with 5000 watts power on the 640 k.c. channel. This is the frequency assigned to KFI, Los Angeles, and to

WHKC, Columbus, Ohio. WOI operates, as a result, only during daylight hours. While a certain amount of night time would be acceptable, it is felt that the present assignment is generally satisfactory and every effort is being made to utilize these facilities to the utmost.

WOI has proven to be a stepping stone to professional advancement for the WOI engineers and has maintained the policy of using qualified students as operators to assist the engineer. When Engineer Ralph Knouf, Iowa State College Electrical Engineering 1924, left WOI to join the staff of the Steinite Radio Company in 1928, the position was filled for about a six months period by calling back a former student operator, R. J. Rockwell, Iowa State College Electrical Engineering 1927, to serve as Radio Engineer. Mr. Rockwell has since held prominent positions and is at present Chief Engineer of WLW of Cincinnati, Ohio.

Mr. Phil Knogle, Iowa State College Electrical Engineering B.S. 1927 and M.S. 1930, served jointly as instructor in communications for the Electrical Engineering Department for one-fourth of the time and as Radio Engineer the remaining three-fourths of the time from December 1, 1928 until the Christmas vacation of 1930, when he left to join the staff of the RCA Manufacturing Company of Camden, New Jersey. He is at present time Assistant Engineer at WLW, Cincinnati, Ohio. During the time Mr. Knogle was Engineer, the antenna was changed, a counterpoise grounded system, consisting of a copper net and two wells, was installed and a counter weight suspended under the water tank. This weight was for the purpose of removing the possibility of unusual strain on the chimney, supporting one end of the antenna, due to the formation of ice and sleet on the antenna.

When Engineer Knogle left the WOI staff the work was carried by students of the Electrical Engineering Department who were directed by one of their own number, Paul Huntsinger, until July 1, 1930. Mr. Huntsinger was then appointed Engineer and served in this position until June, 1934, when he left to accept his present position, that

of Chief Engineer of the Iowa Broadcasting System, Des Moines, and in direct charge of station KRNT and KSO. During the time Mr. Huntsinger was Engineer, the efficiency of the station was improved by converting the transmitter to a low level modulation and completely rebuilding the input equipment. This was accomplished without loss of time from the regular operating schedule or inconvenience to listeners.

When Mr. Huntsinger left, the position was filled by the appointment of John Lewis, Iowa State College Electrical Engineering 1931; Mr. Lewis had served as an operator during his undergraduate days and as assistant Engineer for one year during the time Mr. Huntsinger was Engineer. Lewis served as Engineer for the period from July 1, 1934 to December 25, 1934, when he joined the staff of the Iowa Broadcasting System, Des Moines.

Mr. W. E. Stewart joined the staff of WOI January 1, 1935, and continued in this capacity until November 1, 1939, when he left to accept a Civil Service appointment for radio work with the United States Government in the Panama Canal Zone. Mr. Stewart had earned his B.S. and M. S. degrees at the University of Nebraska prior to his work at WOI, and in June, 1939, Iowa State College awarded him the professional degree of Electrical Engineering.

For some time it had been evident that WOI was not making the most efficient use of its assigned frequency. This was partly for the reason that the flat top antenna suspended between the water tank and the chimney, located near the buildings of the Mechanical Engineering Department, was not as efficient as necessary to comply with the regulations of the Federal Communications Commission in radiating the signals of WOI.

Plans and specifications were prepared by Radio Engineer W. E. Stewart with the assistance of other college staff members for a 400 foot vertical antenna and a 2000 foot coaxial cable leading from the WOI transmitter in Engineering Annex to the site of the antenna north of the Agricultural Engineering Building.

The plans and specifications were approved by the Regional Public Works Administration office of Omaha, Nebraska, who agreed to pay 45% of the cost of purchase and installation. Bids were advertised for a ten day period and opened October 28, 1938. The contract for the 400 foot triangular Truscon tower was awarded to the J. E. Lovejoy company of Des Moines, and the contract for the construction and installation of the electric lines was awarded to the George Weiler Company of Indianola, Iowa. Work was started shortly after the contracts were awarded and in spite of cold winter weather the work was completed and put in service April 1, 1939. While no complete field intensity survey has been made, it is estimated from partial surveys and correspondence that the signal strength of WOI has been materially strengthened by the change to the modern vertical antenna.

For several years the staff of WOI has been interested in securing a new location for its studios, transmitter and offices. When it became evident that a new building known as the Service Building was to be erected on the Iowa State Campus, Engineer W. E. Stewart, the architect, Mr. Thorvald Thorson of Forest City, employed by the Board of Education for the Service Building, and Prof. A. H. Kimball prepared plans and specifications for the transmitter rooms, studios, offices and lounge that are located on the third floor of the new Service Building. The building and equipment were made possible through a grant of 45% from the Public Works Administration, and the plans were approved by the PWA Regional office at Omaha. Bids were advertised and the contract for the erection of the building awarded to the Harlan Contracting Company of Harlan, Iowa, while the contract for the 5 kilowatt transmitter was awarded to the RCA Manufacturing Company of Camden, New Jersey. A construction permit was filed with the Federal Communications Commission and permission granted to proceed with the installation.

The new transmitter was installed, tested and put in service September 23, 1939. It has proven to be much more

reliable, economical and efficient than the old composite transmitter. Because the use of the new transmitter did not depend on the old transmitter at all, it was possible to change from one to the other without loss of time in the service to listeners.

The new studios and offices were occupied October 23, 1939 and again WOI feels that it is well equipped as mechanical facilities are concerned, until such time as the art of broadcasting shall have developed to such a stage as to make the present equipment seem obsolete and antiquated.

When Mr. Stewart left the WOI staff, the position of Engineer was filled by the appointment of Mr. Louie L. Lewis, Iowa State College Electrical Engineering 1931, who had had charge of the State Police Radio Station at Storm Lake for the previous four and one-half years.

—A. G. Woolfries, better known as "Andy" to many thousands of Iowans, was associated with WOI as a student and as an announcer from 1923 to 1941. He is now with the Iowa Broadcasting Company, Des Moines.

CELEBRATING THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Fifty year birthdays are not uncommon but in a state itself less than one hundred years old, the accomplishment of fifty years of effective and continuous work recording and preserving history is indeed an achievement. Although historical organizations existed prior to 1892, when the Iowa State Department of History and Archives was established, the true date of historical work in this state dates from that decade. In 1892 the "Historical Department" was organized under Charles Aldrich; later in the decade Prof. Benj. F. Shambaugh began his life's work with the older State Historical Society of Iowa at Iowa City. It is unusual that a state should produce at the same time men with the same zeal and enthusiasm for their work as Charles Aldrich, the founder of this Department, and Prof. Shambaugh.

Thus in a larger sense, 1942 marks the fiftieth anniversary, not alone of the Iowa State Department of History and Archives, but also of the awakened appreciation by Iowans five decades ago to the value and worth of recording their past, to a conception that truly the days were hastening on, to a realization that a knowledge of those days ought to be preserved.

Quite appropriately there appears in this issue of *THE ANNALS OF IOWA* a brief outline of the history of the Department over the last half century. And equally appropriate, that sketch is written by Ora Williams, long time friend of Charles Aldrich and Edgar R. Harlan, and now himself, since April, 1939, Curator of the institution. Mr. Williams has known on terms of intimacy all the curators since the beginning in 1892, as well as having been well acquainted with the leaders in Iowa's governmental circles over an even longer period.

The Golden Anniversary observance of the Department, conditioned by the demands of war, were simple and in keeping with the occasion.

Special displays were exhibited in the corridors and halls of the building during the whole week April 5-11. Due to the impact of the war, military themes were strongly in evidence. Extensive poster and cartoon displays of World War I and World War II were shown on the first floor and in the rotunda. Case displays of military company reports and documents of Iowa units from Civil War years, recruitment posters of that war and of the Spanish American War were likewise exhibited. Through the courtesy of the Davenport Public Museum and its director, John Bailey, a special case was on display showing samples of the excellent Mexican and South American materials in that museum. The Iowa Antique Association likewise exhibited a case of glassware, pendants, ornaments and jewelry of past years owned by members of that association.

On Wednesday afternoon, April 8, a special exhibition of old time costumes and dress was held in the West Portrait Gallery. Not "stage costumes," but authentic originals, the dresses represented periods of style from 1878 to 1913. Comprised of gowns belonging to the Department, and others loaned by Mrs. L. B. Schmidt of Ames, Iowa, a splendid Norwegian dress loaned by the courtesy of Prof. S. S. Reque, director of the Norwegian-American Museum of Decorah, Iowa, and Mr. Bailey of the Davenport Public Museum, the exhibit attracted universal interest among adults and schools groups as well. Modeled for the occasion by members of the Iowa Antique Association, each dress was accompanied by a brief description and explanation of its salient points of style and material. A series of photographs and Godey's *Lady Book* and other well known style journals of yesteryear were displayed in connection with the exhibit.

HISTORY AND WAR

Thursday, April 9, a small informal conference attended by officers of local historical societies in Iowa, and other interested friends, was held in the West Portrait Gallery of

the Historical Building to discuss "The Role of Historical Agencies in War Time." All were agreed to the fundamental proposition that a knowledge of and an appreciation of the past was essential to good citizenship, moreover, that such a knowledge was essential to a determined and continued prosecution of the war. The preservation and the dissemination of that essential knowledge was deemed an immediate obligation of both state and local historical groups.

The conference was primarily concerned with what specific steps the local societies and interested friends could take to be of service in war time. It was felt that each organization should study all ways in which it could contribute to the war effort. The conclusion was that the role of historical agencies was essentially that of preservation, and of publicizing the information pertinent to the current struggle. While local societies should not neglect the interest in the pioneer eras, their primary attention at the moment should be on the absorbing matter of the war—its prosecution and the community's contribution thereto—and keeping a record thereof.

The following were among the suggestions offered and recommended:

1. Each society—or locally interested friend—should prepare and keep on file with the public library, at the county seat at least, a current alphabetical list of all enlisted and drafted men from the town or county. It was urged that the occasional appearance of such lists in the local newspapers although helpful, are difficult to quickly locate, moreover such names are not alphabetized. A flexible card list was recommended.

2. Each public library in each town in the state was urged to begin and maintain a regular file on "County War Activities," to contain clippings, articles, news, citations, pictures of those activities in that county relating to World War II.

3. Since the various rationing boards, selective service boards, and their kindred agencies are all federal units of

the United States government, and therefore all their records will eventually leave the community and return to Washington at the conclusion of the war, it was recommended strongly that each county make arrangements for maintaining in the county all the possible records, duplicates, releases, lists, of the local activities of the county boards. It was recommended that the public libraries or the county court house be sought as a repository.

4. It was further recommended that the local historical societies urge upon each of the volunteer organizations in the county the wisdom of providing for the permanent preservation of a careful record of their current activities, as a local unit in the larger state and nation-wide plans of the particular organization. In many cases this could be accomplished, it was pointed out, by arranging to receive duplicate reports which the local group prepared for the state or regional offices of the organization.

5. Each participant in the civilian war work, as a machinist, a laborer, a technician, each participant in the war efforts on the field or at the battle fronts should be encouraged to keep a diary or journal. Those societies which have a sizable reserve fund were strongly recommended to make a project of presenting a small pocket diary to each man and boy enlisted or drafted into the armed services. Many rich returns from such a step are certain.

6. Pictures and photographs of boys leaving for service, boys in uniform, enlisting, should be promptly taken and kept by the society. Likewise photographs of alterations in the city, in business structures, in factories erected owing to the demands of war should similarly be taken and preserved.

7. Each local society or locally interested friend of history was urged to plan patriotic programs and meetings of a community nature, tying in The Peoples War with the earlier military record of the county. This would mean somewhat a diminution of emphasis upon the pioneer eras.

Complimenting the State Historical Society of Iowa at Iowa City on its clipping project, whereby approximately

100 Iowa newspapers are clipped each week for relevant war items relating to the state, the conference returned once more to its theme that history is indeed a vital link in the war effort. To neglect its force is to cripple the potential strength of the nation.

Recognizing that this epoch-making struggle of world powers can never be understood without recourse to the essential records, the conference unanimously adopted the following resolution, later mailed to all chairmen of county rationing and selective service boards:

"RESOLVED. That it is the sense of this conference that we earnestly urge all local boards, commissions and other agencies having to do with any phase of war work, and especially as to the personnel of the fighting forces and the home front, to use their utmost diligence in the care and preservation of all records pertaining to their work. All such are strongly urged to cooperate with local libraries, county officers and the state historical agencies in the permanent preservation of all important records."

Thursday evening, April 9, the Golden Anniversary Dinner of the Iowa State Department of History and Archives was held at the Hotel Fort Des Moines. Friends of the Department and of Iowa history were warmly greeted and the Department congratulated upon its fiftieth anniversary by Governor George A. Wilson, chairman of the board of trustees of the institution. Other speakers included the Hon. F. F. Faville, former member of the Iowa State Supreme Court, and member of the board of trustees from 1921 to 1933, and Curator Ora Williams.

The address of the evening, "Wisconsin and Iowa, Historical Neighbors," was delivered by Dr. Edward P. Alexander, Superintendent of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. A native of Centerville, Iowa, educated in Drake University and the State University of Iowa before later studies in the East and his work with the New York State Historical Society, Dr. Alexander assumed his present post with the Wisconsin historical society in October, 1941. Con-

trasting and comparing the developments of the two states from the days when they enjoyed the one territorial government to the later days of the Grangers and agricultural specialization and political leadership, Dr. Alexander's address was a fitting conclusion to the week of formal observances.

The second half of the first century has commenced. It is hoped that the next fifty years will be even more productive of good to Iowa history than were those just past. In the words of Mr. Williams, the Iowa State Department of History and Archives is now no longer a hobby, it is an institution.

K. E. C.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

END OF VOLUME TWENTY-THREE

With the April issue of *THE ANNALS OF IOWA*, volume twenty-three comes to a close. This change, which cuts in half the old two-year eight-issue volume, a change long desired by the editor, has been made further advisable by the adoption of the new and improved quality of paper on which the magazine has been printed since July, 1941. The old two-year, eight-issue volume would have been too unwieldy for convenient use. The editor hopes the change, together with the more frequent indexing of the volume, will make *THE ANNALS* of even greater utility to its readers.

DEPARTMENT NOTES

THE IOWA STATE ARCHIVES, long a victim of neglect and careless attention, and suffering from the dangers of dampness, heat, and dirt, have finally in the past eighteen months begun to receive the attention they deserve. The Forty-Ninth General Assembly amended and improved the state archival law. The same legislature provided the means for a more economical shelving of the stored documents of state, a plan, however, war production curtailments have caused to be postponed.

The most pressing demand of the Department in its care of the archives has been the need for added storage and working space. This need has been partially met by the renting by the state of a moderately sized brick constructed community hall, known as the "John A. Kasson Memorial Hall" at East Thirteenth and Des Moines streets, one block from the Historical Department. Little used in late years, the building has been rennovated and prepared for the storage and handling of the state records upon which the Historical Records Survey had been working. The acquisition of the

building was timely, for that project has now been abandoned due to war restrictions on WPA activities. While this building will not approach a solution of the problems of storage and administration of the archives, it does offer a welcomed relief to the conditions formerly existing.

Through a grant of the retrenchment and reform committee of the last General Assembly, a temporary staff was made possible to handle the work of transfer.

The steady increase in applications for census records noted in the October issue of *THE ANNALS* is reflected in the certification figures for January, February, and March, 754, 965, 993 respectively.

THE MANUSCRIPT DIVISION was fortunate to receive during the past quarter a letter press book of Reuben Noble, an influential political figure in both the Democratic and Republican parties in the middle and later years of the last century. The book was presented to the Department by Miss Iola Quigley, whose father was a former law partner of Reuben Noble.

Another important accession in the manuscript division was the fourteen large folio-sized scrap books of the military records and reports, together with military maps and miscellaneous letters of General Samuel Ryan Curtis, member of Congress from the second Iowa Congressional district from 1857-1861, when he resigned to join the Union forces. A graduate of West Point, General Curtis held commands in Missouri, the Southwest, and on the western plains in the later Indian troubles. A number of letters relate also to his pre-war railroad activities. These valued papers came as a gift of his granddaughter, Mrs. Lynn Curtis of New York City, N. Y.

BY THE AID OF the Veterans of the Rainbow Division, and the assistance of the State of Iowa, the Department has recently received 16 mm. and 35 mm. films, rephotographs of the original motion picture film of the Iowa members of that division, the 168th National Guard, taken from the official films of the war department. A sound tract was dubbed in in the rephotographing job. After preliminary showings

the last of March and the first of April, these films have been presented to the Department for administration.

Many communities and organizations have sought the use of the films for patriotic gatherings or for fund raising projects. The films may be borrowed upon the filing of an application and its approval by the Curator under certain standard conditions.

THE MUSEUM DIVISION of the Department has completed a twenty-five minute colored film of water fowl of Iowa, ducks and shore birds. Prepared by Jack W. Musgrove, museum director, with the aid of Maynard F. Reece, museum assistant, this is the second film made by the museum division, the first being an experimental film of big game animals of the western plains states.

The museum plans to make a film of historical sites in Iowa this spring and summer, also to be a colored film.

AN EVENT of considerable interest to friends of the Department was the completion of an excellent oil portrait of Curator Ora Williams in mid April by Maynard F. Reece, staff artist in the museum division of the Department. Although completed after the formal observance of the semi-centennial of the Department, the painting is an excellent contribution to the celebration of that occasion and the recognition of Mr. Williams' service to Iowa history. The painting will later be hung in the portrait gallery of the Department.

E. F. PITTMAN, director of the newspaper division, who has been making motion pictures of scenes typical of farm life in the 1870's, showed portions of his film before the Madison County Historical Society, April 21.

PICTURES OF IOWA HOMES in each county of Iowa are wanted by Kenneth E. Colton, for the photograph collection of the Department. Particularly desired are pictures of homes built in the 1860's and the following three decades. All friends and interested photographers are urged to contribute what they may. Dates of the erection and the names of architects are desired too, if this is obtainable.

NOTABLE DEATHS

ELMA G. ALBERT, lawyer and jurist, died February 19, 1942, in Jefferson, Iowa. Born June 5, 1866, near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, he came to Iowa with his family when four years of age. Mr. Albert was educated in the country schools receiving his professional training in the law school of Drake University, from which he was graduated in 1891. County attorney for Greene County from 1901 to 1906, he was elected judge of the 16th judicial district in 1914, serving continuously from 1915 to 1925, when he became a justice of the Iowa State Supreme Court. He served on the supreme bench continuously until 1937.

FRANK P. CLARKSON, journalist, died March 7, 1942, in North Hollywood, California. The son of Richard P. Clarkson, former owner and editor of the *Iowa State Register*, Des Moines, Mr. Clarkson was educated in the Des Moines schools and the State University of Iowa. Following a period on the *Register*, he bought and edited the *Ida Grove Pioneer*. At the time of his death he was the managing editor of the *San Fernando Valley Times*, North Hollywood, California, a position he had held for twenty-five years.

LAMONTE COWLES, lawyer, died February 24, 1942, in Burlington, Iowa. Born in Oskaloosa, Iowa, September 30, 1859, he was the son of the Reverend William Fletcher Cowles and Maria E. Cowles. LaMonte was educated in Iowa Wesleyan College, Mount Pleasant, Iowa, from which he was graduated in 1879. After a brief career with the engineering departments of the Union Pacific and the Chicago Burlington and Pacific railroads he read law and was admitted to the bar in 1886. Commencing the practice in Burlington that same year, he remained there continuously in the practice since. A staunch Republican in politics, he served in the Iowa State General Assembly as senator from his district in the 34th and 35th assemblies, 1911 and 1913. At various times in his career he served as chairman of the city, county and state congressional committees, was a member of the state central committee, and represented his party at three national conventions. A member of his county, state, and the American bar associations, he was likewise a member of numerous fraternal organizations.

MILLARD FILLMORE EDWARDS, jurist, died February 23, 1942, in Parkersburg, Iowa. Born October 22, 1858, near Muncie, Lycoming

County, Pennsylvania, he was the son of William and Catherine Smole Edwards. Educated in Williamsport and Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, graduating from the Central State Normal School of the latter place in 1882, he taught school one year before entering the law school of the State University of Iowa, from which he was graduated in 1884. After one year in Pennsylvania he returned to Iowa and the practice of law in Parkersburg. Active in community affairs, Mr. Edwards at various times served as Mayor, town clerk, and member of the school board of Parkersburg. A member of the 28th and 29th General Assemblies of Iowa, he also served as judge of the 12th judicial district from 1917 to 1939.

RAY VANCE LUCAS, newspaper publisher, died April 26, in Oelwein, Iowa. Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, January 16, 1876, he was the son of Albert Gallatan Lucas and Annie Maria Byers Lucas. Following an early career as a postal clerk on various Iowa railroads, Mr. Lucas entered the newspaper business at the turn of the century as editor and publisher of the Earlville, Iowa, *Phoenix*. Later, in 1906, he became editor and publisher of the Bedford, Iowa, *Free Press*. Three years later he joined the staff of the Shenandoah, *World*. In 1919 began a four year period as field secretary for the Greater Iowa Association and as secretary of the Oelwein Chamber of Commerce. In 1923 he became editor of the *Oelwein Register*, where he continued until his death.

He was an active member of the Republican Party.

HENRY SCHOLTE NOLLEN, insurance executive, died April 24, 1942, in Des Moines, Iowa. The son of John and Johanna S. Nollen and the grandson of Henry P. Scholte, founder of the town of Pella, Iowa, Mr. Nollen was born September 26, 1866, in Pella. Educated in the Pella schools, he attended Central College, Pella, from which he was graduated in 1885. After a year as professor of mathematics in his *alma mater*, he entered private business in Des Moines as bookkeeper and traveling auditor before joining the Bankers Life Association in 1893, remaining in insurance the rest of his life. In 1913 he became executive vice president of the Equitable Life Insurance Company of Iowa; in 1921 he became president; from 1939 to his death he served as chairman of the board.

A member of the board of trustees of the Des Moines Waterworks for over twenty years, Mr. Nollen was also a trustee of the Des Moines Public Library from 1909 to 1920, a member of the Des Moines Association of Fine Arts, and of numerous national educational, professional and scientific societies. A member of the Episcopal Church, he was an active member of the various Masonic orders.

HUGH P. STUART, jurist, died March 8, 1942, in Dubuque, Iowa. The son of Catherine and Charles Stuart, he was born in Dubuque July 10, 1878. A graduate of Columbia College (now Loras College), Dubuque, he was graduated from the college of law, State University of Iowa, in 1907, after first serving on the news staff of the Dubuque *Telegraph-Herald*. Practicing law in Dubuque he quickly became prominent in the work of the Democratic Party in the city and county. Elected county attorney in 1914 he served two terms, declining a third in 1918. In 1939 he was elected to his first term as judge of the 19th judicial district, a term he was still serving at the time of his death.

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